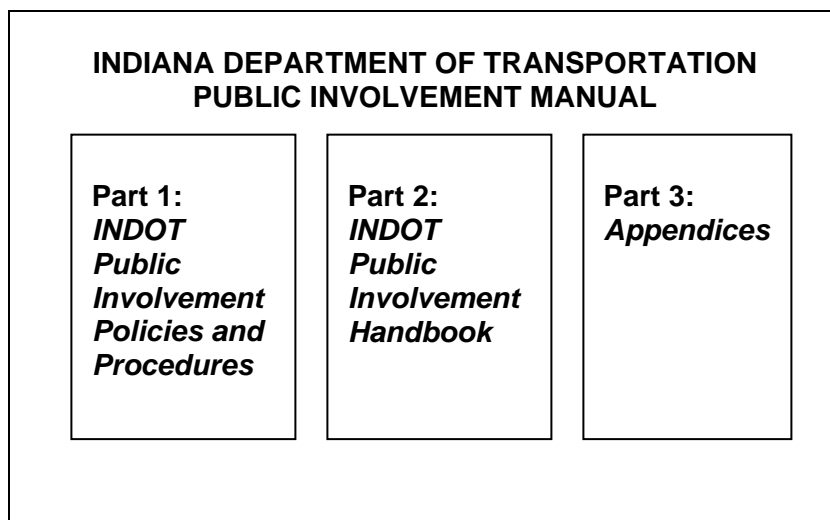


INTRODUCTION TO THE INDOT PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MANUAL

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) has prepared the **INDOT Public Involvement Manual** to provide guidance to those who are engaged in providing public involvement opportunities related to INDOT decisions and actions and to let the public know what they can expect in terms of INDOT public involvement policies and practices.

This *Manual* is primarily addressed to INDOT staff and their consultants who will carry out INDOT's public involvement activities. The Manual will also be useful to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs), and local officials that conduct their own public involvement activities. The Manual will help the MPOs, RPOs, and local officials understand where their processes fit with INDOT public involvement approaches and will provide them with ideas on how to implement their own public involvement programs. In addition, the Manual is intended to provide the interested public reader with information about INDOT's commitment to public involvement and about how and where the public can become involved in the planning and project development processes.

The Indiana Department of Transportation Public Involvement Manual consists of *Part 1: INDOT Public Involvement Policies and Procedures*, *Part 2: INDOT Public Involvement Handbook*, and *Part 3: Appendices*.



Part 1, *INDOT Public Involvement Policies and Procedures*, lays out INDOT's fundamental requirements for public involvement, established by Federal and State law and regulations and by INDOT policies. The *Policies and Procedures* Part has been approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) **(date)**¹. Every two years, INDOT will review the public involvement *Policies and Procedures* to ensure that they represent current policy and practice,

¹ Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 771 (CFR 771.111(h)(1)) states: "Each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a public involvement/public hearing program."

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as required by 23 CFR 450.212(a)(7).² FHWA must approve any changes to these *Policies and Procedures*.

Part 2, *INDOT Public Involvement Handbook*, provides detailed “how-to” information on public involvement approaches and methods employed by INDOT to inform and engage the public. Since INDOT uses a range of activities to fulfill its goal of providing proactive, open, and continuous public involvement, the *Handbook* provides a menu of options to assist INDOT planners, project managers, engineers, and public involvement staff and consultants to INDOT as they choose how to implement the requirements and the intent of the law, regulations, and policies on individual planning and project initiatives. The *Handbook* reflects the range of INDOT practices that extend beyond the baseline requirements in engaging the public.

Part 3, *Appendices* include a list of acronyms and glossary of terms, the text of pertinent Federal and State law and regulations, the text of official Federal guidance on public involvement, INDOT’s organizational structure, key contacts related to public involvement in transportation decision making, a compendium of specific techniques that can be used to implement public involvement, and examples of forms.

The *Handbook* and *Appendices* will be updated by INDOT on an as-needed basis. Such modifications do not require FHWA approval.

² 23 CFR 450.212(a)(7) states: “Public involvement processes . . . shall provide for: . . . Periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that the process provides full and open access to all and revision of the process as necessary.”

DRAFT OUTLINE OF THE *INDOT PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MANUAL*

Part 1: INDOT Policies and Procedures (the basic requirements under law, regulations, and INDOT policy)

- I. The Mission and Public Involvement Policy of INDOT
- II. Federal and State Law and Regulations as a Foundation for Public Involvement Requirements
- III. Public Involvement in the Transportation Planning and Program Development Process
- IV. Public Involvement in the Project Development Process
- V. Public Involvement Activities in Construction, Operations, and Maintenance Phases of Transportation Projects
- VI. Requirements related to Conducting Public Hearings
- VII. Inclusion of Under-Served Individuals and Communities in INDOT Public Involvement Plans and Activities

Part 2: Handbook (expanded information on how to implement public involvement)

- I. Introduction: General introduction about Indiana's commitment to public involvement and why public involvement is important in transportation decision making
- II. What we want to know from the public during different stages of transportation decision making
- III. Who is the public? – General definition and categories of the public
- IV. Communicating with the Public
 - a. Communication Goals – to communicate information and to receive input
 - b. Communication/Outreach Methods
 - i. Mailing list
 - ii. Drop-off distribution sites/repositories for documents
 - iii. Web sites
 - iv. Attendance/presentation at groups/organizations meetings
 - v. Public gathering places
 - vi. Media strategies
 - vii. Notice of survey as a public involvement tool
 - viii. Other mechanisms (kiosks, variable message signs)
- V. Project/Educational materials
 - a. Newsletters
 - b. Scoping report
 - c. Updates
 - d. Videos
 - e. Electronic media
- VI. Meetings and hearings
 - a. Public Hearings
 - b. Public meetings (including open houses and facilitated discussions)
 - c. Charettes and other workshops
- VII. Community Advisory Committees
 - a. What they are
 - b. How to convene
 - c. Roles
 - d. Procedural guidelines
 - e. How to use them effectively

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- VIII. Inclusion of Under-Served Individuals and Communities
 - a. People with Disabilities
 - b. Implementing Environmental Justice
- IX. Developing a Public Involvement Plan
 - a. Determining appropriate level of effort
 - b. Key questions to set public involvement parameters
- X. Tracking and reporting comments/input
 - a. Means of receiving comments
 - b. How to synthesize comments
 - c. Getting comments to decision makers
 - d. Letting the public know what was heard
- XI. Public involvement through consultants
 - a. Contracting for public involvement services
 - b. Oversight and teamwork with consultants
- XII. Evaluating public involvement programs

Part 3: Appendices

Appendix A: Acronyms and Glossary of Terms

Appendix B: Table containing text of relevant federal laws and regulations

Appendix C: Text of relevant guidance documents

- FHWA/FTA Interim Policy on Public Involvement
- FHWA/FTA Questions and Answers on Public Involvement in Transportation Decision Making

Appendix D:

- Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice
- Department of Transportation Order on Environmental Justice
- FHWA Order on Environmental Justice

Appendix E:

- INDOT Organization Chart
- List of contacts

Appendix F: Sample forms